



U.S. Department of State
Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs
Office of Assistance Coordination
Middle East Partnership Initiative (MEPI)
Local Grants Program
<http://mepi.state.gov/>

**Proposal Submission Instructions (PSI)
for Applications to the 2017 MEPI Local Grants Annual Program Statement published on January
3, 2018**

MEPI Program – Yemen

PLEASE REFER TO THIS DOCUMENT WHEN PREPARING AN APPLICATION

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Local Grants Overview

The Office of Assistance Coordination's Middle East Partnership Initiative (MEPI) Program seeks single-country proposals for its Local Grants Program. The Local Grants Program serves as the MEPI Program's most direct means of supporting organizations in the Middle East and North Africa. The Local Grants Program seeks projects that build links among citizens, civil society, government, and the private sector in response to emerging opportunities. The Local Grants Program supports projects that align with U.S. foreign policy goals and promotes U.S. interests in the region, enhancing stability and increasing prosperity across North Africa and the Middle East.

These grants are designed to support one area of the MEPI Strategic Framework:

- *Participatory Governance:* Enable civil society to effectively interact with government officials to increase responsiveness to citizen needs. Enhance citizens' ability to actively participate in their governments and develop a more informed citizenry. Enable government officials' engagement with, and responsiveness to, their citizens to resolve issues of shared concern.

The MEPI Program's Regional Offices, located in the Middle East and North Africa, manage the Local Grants Program. Applications are reviewed and evaluated on the criteria outlined within these Proposal Submission Instructions. For this Proposal Submission Instructions (PSI), MEPI Program - Yemen seeks to support projects that will contribute to the following Key Objective areas identified by the MEPI Local Grants Annual Program Statement (APS), published November 27, 2017 under CFDA number 19.500:

- *Objective 4:* Increase youth engagement in meaningful economic and civic activities
- *Objective 7:* Increase civil society's representation of the needs of citizens through collective action on the local level.

In addition to the general project priority objectives detailed above, MEPI Program – Yemen has identified specific project priority areas outlined below, and sets forth the following guidance for applicants.

MEPI Program – Yemen Project Priority Areas

Problem Statement

Yemen continues to face a host of political, humanitarian, and development challenges that have significantly diminished the resiliency of local communities. Pre-existing tribal, sectarian, and regional divisions are quickly becoming entrenched within communities while internally displaced persons (IDPs) continue to face difficulties integrating into their host communities. Within these divisions, communities struggle with basic mechanisms to resolve local level conflict and lack the skills to collectively engage community leaders on priority issues.

Yemeni youth are particularly at risk of joining the armed conflict and becoming influenced by these divisions. The conflict has led to the suspension of education in many regions with over 1,600 schools closed or destroyed since 2015. Youth's limited access to knowledge and learning prohibits them from serving as positive agents of change within their communities.

Project Priority

The Middle East Partnership Initiative calls for project proposals that seek to address the deepening community divisions at the local level through civil society-led citizen engagement and conflict resolution projects. Projects should focus on providing citizens and youth with an opportunity to engage with their communities and build their conflict resolution skills to help prepare them to be future leaders among Yemeni society. These projects would contribute to creating a conducive environment for achieving political stability. Activities may include, but are not limited to:

1. Civic engagement initiatives that assist citizens with identifying common priorities and developing action plans.
2. Skill building initiatives that increase the engagement of citizens, including youth, to address local social issues of concern, especially in the area of conflict resolution and nonviolent dispute tools.
3. Reconciliation efforts among local community members and leaders to increase communication and build more effective conflict mitigation mechanisms.

Proposals should develop innovative projects to engage multiple sectors of society and strengthen the local dispute resolution skills of citizens. Proposals should also clearly describe the specific outcomes of proposed activities. Special consideration will be given to proposals that focus on efforts to build community cohesion among youth.

As an outcome, Yemeni citizens will strengthen their skills to engage with community leaders and members from various sectors to solve conflict nonviolently and address issues collectively. These projects will help address community divides at the local level and strengthen community resilience and cohesion, building a foundation for the local implementation of future national peace efforts.

Award Information

Funding Instrument Type: Cooperative Agreement, Grant, or Fixed Amount Award

Maximum Award Amount: \$100,000

Minimum Award Amount: \$50,000

Length of Project Period: 12-24 Months with option years

Eligibility

For eligibility requirements please refer to the Funding Opportunity “MEPI Local Grants Annual Program Statement (APS), which was published on November 29, 2017 under CFDA 19.500.

Additionally, all applicants must meet the following eligibility criteria specific to this PSI. Applicants must:

- Have managed at least one project/initiative with a value of \$10,000 USD

Individuals are not eligible to apply to this announcement.

Previous MEPI Connections: MEPI Alumni are encouraged to apply, but we also welcome new partners.

Deadlines and Other Information

Proposals must be submitted to the MEPI Program – Yemen by no later than 5:00pm Eastern Standard Time (EST) on March 5, 2018 . Please clearly label your email subject line to indicate “2017 MEPI Local Grant Application for the MEPI Program – Yemen.”

Completed applications for the MEPI Local Grants Program should be emailed to the MEPI Program – Yemen at: NEA-Grants@state.gov

Interested applicants should email any questions regarding this funding opportunity to NEA-Grants@state.gov with the subject “MEPI Local Grants Yemen Question” by 5:00pm eastern time (ET) on January 24, 2018. The MEPI Program – Yemen will post all the questions received by the deadline, with responses, on <https://mepi.state.gov/mepi/english-mepi/funding-opportunities/apply-for-a-grant/open-funding-opportunities.html> by January 31, 2018. Questions will not be answered individually. Questions received after the January 24 deadline WILL NOT be addressed.

Required Registrations

As detailed in the MEPI Local Grants Annual Program Statement, all organizations must have active registrations of the following:

1. Unique Entity Identifier (UEI), formerly referred to as a Dun and Bradstreet (D&B) Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS)
2. NATO Commercial and Government Entity (NCAGE) code;
3. System for Award Management (SAM.gov); and
4. Internal Revenue Service (IRS), if applicable.

Please apply for the D&B DUNS Number and NCAGE Code at the same time to reduce waiting time of information. The Legal Business Name and Address must MATCH EXACTLY when entering it into the D&B DUNS, NCAGE, SAM.gov, and IRS websites – this includes spaces, parentheses, capitalization, small letters, punctuation, etc. Self-registration in D&B DUNS,

NCAGE, and SAM.gov is **free of charge**.

Note: if organizations are in the process of registration, and have encountered documented, technical registration issues, these applications will be reviewed for eligibility on a case by case basis provided the application is recommended by the selection committee. Per U.S. law, valid and active registration in the relevant systems is a requirement to receive grant funds.

The registrant or entity is required to create an account in each of these websites by initially creating a Username and Password in all sites: Internal Revenue Service (IRS), if necessary; D&B for a UEI; and ultimately, the System for Award Management (SAM.gov).

The Legal Business Name and Address must be precise and **MATCH EXACTLY** when entering it into the IRS, D&B DUNS, NCAGE, and SAM.gov websites—this includes spaces, parentheses, capitalization, small letters, punctuation, etc.

For detailed information on registering for the MEPI Local Grants Program, please reference the 2017 Annual Program Statement (hyperlink).

Application Requirements

Complete applications must include the following:

1. Standard Forms: Completed and signed SF-424, SF-424A, and SF-424B; completed and signed SF-LLL, “Disclosure of Lobbying Activities” (if applicable) (which can be found with the solicitation on Grants.gov and on the Whitehouse.gov website at: <https://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/omb/grants/sflll.pdf>).

2. Project Narrative (not to exceed seven [7] pages in Microsoft Word). Organizations are strongly encouraged to use the Project Narrative Template provided in the Grants.gov announcement to complete the Project Narrative. If an organization chooses not to use the provided format, the Project Narrative must capture all the requested information outlined in the document and clearly label each section for clarity. Project narratives should articulate a logical relationship between proposed activities and desired outcomes – presenting the cause and effect “chain of results” that a project hopes to achieve.

Please note the seven-page limit does not include any other required application document, including Attachments, Detailed Budget, Budget Narrative, or Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (NICRA). Applicants are encouraged to submit multiple documents in a single Microsoft Word or Adobe file.

3. Detailed Line-Item Budget and Narrative (preferably in Microsoft Excel): Includes three [3] columns including the request to MEPI, any cost sharing contribution, and total budget (see Budget Template for more information on budget format). A summary budget should also be included using the OMB approved budget categories (see SF-424A as a sample). **Costs must be in U.S. dollars.** Detailed line-item budgets for sub-grantees should be included in additional tabs within the excel workbook. The budget template includes a section which allows for substantive

explanations and justifications for each line item in the detailed budget spreadsheet, as well as the source and a description of all cost-share offered. For ease of review, MEPI recommends applicants order the budget narrative as presented in the SF-424A. Personnel costs should include a clarification of the roles and responsibilities of key staff, base salary, and percentage of time devoted to the project. The budget narrative should provide additional information that might not be readily apparent in the detailed-line item budget, not simply repeat what is represented numerically in the budget, i.e., salaries are for salaries or travel is for travel. A line item budget template and additional budget guidance is provided with the APS.

4. Roles and responsibilities of key project personnel (2 pages maximum): Please include short bios that highlight relevant professional experience. Given the limited space, CVs are not recommended for submission.

5. Audit: Your organization's most recent financial audit statement (A-133 audit or 2 CFR 200 Part F, if applicable or standard audit).

Optional Additional Attachments

Additional optional attachments may include timeline information, letters of support, memorandums of understanding/agreement, etc. Letters of support and MOUs must be specific to the project implementation (e.g. from proposed partners or sub-award recipients) and will not count towards the page limit.

6. If your organization has a NICRA and includes NICRA charges in the budget, your latest NICRA should be included as a .pdf file. This document will not be reviewed by the panelists, but rather used by program and grant staff if the submission is recommended for funding and does not count towards the page limit. If your proposal involves subawards to organizations charging indirect costs, please also submit the applicable NICRA as a .pdf file.

Please note: The MEPI Program may request additional documents not included in this PSI should your project be considered for funding.

Additional information that successful applicants must submit after notification of intent to make a Federal award, but prior to issuance of a Federal award, may include:

- 1) Written responses and any revised application documents addressing any conditions or recommendations from the MEPI Selection Committee;
- 2) Submission of required documents to register in any applicable U.S. government grant systems, if receiving MEPI Program funding for the first time, unless an exemption is provided;
- 3) Other requested information or documents included in the notification of intent to make a Federal award or subsequent communications prior to issuance of a Federal award.

All submissions must include components 1-6, and must be submitted in English.

Submitting an Application

To submit your application, please follow the steps below:

1. Review the completed application documents (Application for Federal Assistance Form (SF-424), Budget Information Forms (SF-424A) and SF-424B, Project Narrative and Budget Narrative) for accuracy and make any necessary changes. Please note: A signature is required on the Application for Federal Assistance (SF-424). If applicable, complete, sign, and submit the SF-LLL “Disclosure of Lobbying Activities.”
2. **All application materials must be in English and all costs must be in U.S. dollars. If an original document within the application is in another language, an English translation must be provided.** For any documents provided in both English and a foreign language, the English language version is the controlling version. (Please note: the Department of State, as indicated in 2 CFR 200.111, requires that English is the official language of all award documents).
3. Send all documents via email to NEA-Grants@state.gov. **If you are unable to email the documents, please contact the U.S. Embassy to discuss other delivery options.** The application materials must be submitted electronically by the designated due date and time noted in the Proposal Submission Instructions (PSI). If reasonable accommodations are granted for persons with disabilities or for security reasons, applications must still be received by MEPI by the designated due date and time noted in the NOFO. It is the sole responsibility of the applicant to ensure that all of the material submitted in the grant application package is complete, accurate, and current. The MEPI Program strongly encourages all applicants, especially foreign or first-time applicants, to submit applications before the designated due date to ensure that the application has been received and is complete.

Award Notices

Applicants who do not advance to the Technical Review stage will be notified 30 business days after the closing of the announcement. The authorized representative and program point of contact listed on the SF-424 will receive the notification via email. If an applicant does not receive such a notification, their submission was put forward for review.

MEPI expects to notify applicants about the status of their application by April 30, 2018. Final awards cannot be made until funds have been appropriated by Congress, allocated and committed through internal Bureau procedures. Successful applicants will receive a Federal Assistance Award (FAA) from the Bureau’s Grants Office. The FAA and the original proposal with subsequent modifications (if applicable) shall be the only binding authorizing document between the recipient and the U.S. Government. The FAA will be signed by an authorized Grants Officer, and transmitted to the recipient’s responsible officer identified in the application. **MEPI reserves the right to award funding to applicants under this announcement for a period of up to two years after the announcement’s close date.**

Unsuccessful applicants will receive notification of the results of the application review from MEPI Program – Yemen.

Proposal Review Process

A MEPI Selection Committee reviews all local grant proposals. The MEPI Program team will inform organizations if their proposals will or will not be shortlisted for further consideration. Only the most competitive proposals received by MEPI Committees will be selected for further consideration by MEPI's regional offices, which will process and negotiate the awards. The issuance of a grant award by a MEPI Regional Office is contingent on the availability of funds and the negotiation and finalization of an approved budget and award package.

Proposal Review Criteria

Applications should address the evaluation criteria outlined below. Selection Committee members will evaluate each application individually against the following criteria, totaling 100 possible points.

Quality of Project Idea: (30 points)

- Proposal addresses one of the three objectives outlined in the PSI.
- Approach is clearly outlined and takes into account the unique context of the country.
- Approach is innovative and realistic, and takes into account other previous or ongoing efforts so as to not be duplicative.
- Applications should address how the project will engage relevant stakeholders and should identify local partners as appropriate. If local partners have been identified, applicants should include letters of support from proposed in-country partners. Applicants who propose specific partners but do not provide letters of support may lose points. If applicable, the specific roles of any subawardees should be defined.

Project Planning/Ability to Achieve Objectives: (30 points)

- Proposal provides a clear articulation of how proposed activities will contribute to the project objectives AND in turn will also contribute to overall MEPI key objectives.
- Activities are clearly developed and detailed, including estimated timeframe.
- Proposal clearly explains how activities will achieve desired results, and the overall project design is realistic in terms of feasibility and expectations.
- Proposal includes an articulation of a theory of change or logic model to demonstrate how the project will achieve desired impact.
- Objectives should be ambitious, yet measurable, results-focused and achievable in a reasonable time frame.
- Project beneficiaries are clearly defined, and selection criteria for identifying specific beneficiaries is provided if applicable.

Institution's Record and Capacity: (15 points)

- Proposal demonstrates that applicant meets the eligibility requirements stated in the PSI regarding time period in operation and previous funding thresholds.

- Proposal includes examples of successful past programming that illustrate responsible fiscal management and full compliance with all reporting requirements for past grants.
- Proposed personnel and institutional resources should be adequate and appropriate to achieve the project's objectives.

Cost Effectiveness: (20 points)

- Budget indicates reasonable cost estimates based on local standard rates.
- All costs are clearly defined in terms of purpose, as well as detail indicating how amounts have been calculated. Budget items should be clearly explained and justified to demonstrate its necessity, appropriateness, and its link to the project objectives and activities.
- Project design takes into account opportunities for cost-savings and budget does not include expenses that are not essential to effective project implementation.

MEPI Alumni Connection (5 points)

We value the alumni of our many USG-sponsored projects and programs and would like to enhance the connection between ongoing initiatives of our implementing partners and our ever-growing base of alumni. Therefore, we will give priority to projects that include and detail MEPI alumni engagement in activities and project components. For the purposes of this evaluation criteria, MEPI alumni are considered as former participants of the exchange programs; or beneficiaries in previous MEPI training programs lasting more than 5 weeks; or previous recipients of MEPI local grants.

Please note: While cost-share is NOT a requirement of this PSI, MEPI does encourage applicants to leverage organizational and/or other external resources where possible. If cost-share is included in the budget then the recipient must maintain written records to support all allowable costs that are claimed as its contribution to cost-share, as well as costs to be paid by the Federal government. Such records are subject to audit. In the event the recipient does not meet the minimum amount of cost-sharing as stipulated in the recipient's budget, the MEPI Program's contribution may be reduced in proportion to the recipient's contribution.

Additional Information

The MEPI Program will not consider applications that reflect any type of support for any member, affiliate, or representative of a designated terrorist organization or armed actors.

Applicants should be aware that the MEPI Program understands that some information contained in applications may be considered sensitive or proprietary and will make appropriate efforts to protect such information. However, applicants are advised that the MEPI Program cannot guarantee that such information will not be disclosed, including pursuant to the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) or other similar statutes.